

Serial N . 09/238,790
Art Unit 1743

amount, but it always has at least the same properties as the substance.) Similarly, a third mixture, or any other mixture, inherently has a pH value. The fact that a characteristic of that value is first specified later in the same claim does not create any lack of clarity that is discernible to the applicants — it is, after all, an inherent impossibility to define everything in a claim in its first word!

The examiner next asserted that the word "optionally" used in claim 1, step (II) (A) is indefinite and cited several authorities, the most recent of which was dated 1961, in support of a general proposition that narrow and broad limitations in the same claim are impermissible. However, in *Ex parte Cordova*, 10 USPQ2d 1949, 1950 (Bd. Pat. App. & Int. 1989), it was explicitly held that, "[T]he use of the alternative expression 'optionally' in the rejected claims does not obfuscate the subject matter appellants regard as their invention." Also see, *Manual of Patent Examining Procedure* 2173.05(i)III, page 2100-152 of the edition of February 2000.

The examiner next asserted that the term "precisely measured" lacks sufficient antecedent basis, since it was never defined before. The term is in fact precisely defined in the specification at page 7 lines 8 through 11.

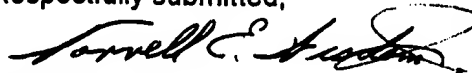
The examiner next asserted that, "The language of the claim 1 is very verbose and includes information that is not needed for a clear understanding of the invention." Even if true, this assertion is not believed to state a basis of rejection supported by statute or regulation: The requirement of 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, is for the presence of sufficient information to define the claimed invention, not for the absence of unnecessary information. Verbosity is a stylistic judgment not relevant to any statute or regulation known to the undersigned.

Finally, the examiner asserted that claims 13 and 15 recite a Markush group with only one member by using the phrase, "a component (B) that is selected from the group consisting of molecules that each contain two distinct moieties". The full recitation truncated by the examiner in the quotation above is, "a component (B) that is selected from the group consisting of molecules that each contain two distinct moieties selected from the group consisting of hydroxyl, ether, and non-tetravalently bonded nitrogen moieties, these two distinct moieties being bonded so that there are exactly two or three carbon atoms in the shortest continuously bonded chain between the nitrogen or oxygen atoms in each of the distinct moieties." This is a recitation of a large number of chemical substances in generic form, not of a single member. A few examples of this class include ethylene diamine, ethylene glycol and all of its monoethers and diethers, and

Serial No. 09/238,790
Art Unit 1743

propylene glycol and all of its monoethers and diethers. There is no ambiguity in this recitation, because given any structural formula, one can readily determine whether or not the substance represented by the formula is part of the Markush group or not.

Respectfully submitted,



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